3.5 ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to examine reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that avoid or reduce action-related significant adverse impacts and which may still allow for the achievement of the stated purpose and need, and goals and objectives of the proposed action. As identified in Chapter 3.3, "Transportation," of this Final EIS ~~DEIS~~, significant adverse impacts to traffic would occur at two intersections during specific periods. These include the eastbound East Fordham Road left turn lane at Webster Avenue, which cannot be fully mitigated during the AM, midday, and PM peak hours. The other location is the southbound Webster Avenue left turn lane at East Fordham Road, which cannot be fully mitigated during the midday, PM, and Saturday peak hours (see Chapter 3.6, "Mitigation," for more information).

For this EIS, the following alternatives were considered: a No-Action Alternative and a Lower Density Alternative. A No Unmitigated Impact Alternative was also explored, which considered the magnitude of development that could occur on the projected development sites without resulting in any unmitigated significant adverse impacts. Because the traffic conditions at the impacted intersections are expected to be poor in the No-Action condition, any increase in traffic through those intersections is expected to worsen conditions, such that any new development on the projected development sites could result in a significant adverse impact. Additionally, as explained in Chapter 3.6, mitigation measures such as parking prohibitions, signal timing changes or restriping are not feasible in these locations. Given these conditions, there is no feasible Unmitigated Impact Alternative available that would meet the goals and objectives of the proposed action.

A ten-year period is typically considered the length of time necessary to allow for changes due to area-wide rezoning actions, so the analysis year for the Proposed Action is 2020. Therefore, analyses of alternatives to the proposed action also consider an analysis year of 2020.

3.5.1 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under CEQR, consideration of a No-Action Alternative is required. The No-Action Alternative examines future conditions within the proposed rezoning area assuming the absence of the proposed action. This alternative provides a baseline for the evaluation of impacts associated with the proposed action.

Because it is used as a baseline, it is analyzed and described in terms relevant to each respective technical area discussion presented in this EIS as well as the previously published EAS.

The No-Action Alternative is not intended to and would not fulfill the project purpose and need. Further, as indicated below, under the No-Action Alternative the traffic

conditions at the intersections that are significantly impacted under the the proposed action would still be poor, even absent the proposed action.

In particular, with the No-Action Alternative at the Webster Avenue/Bedford Park Boulevard intersection, during the AM peak period, the eastbound Bedford Park Boulevard approach would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.94. The westbound Bedford Park Boulevard approach would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.95. The southbound left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS F with 132.3 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.13. During the midday period, the eastbound Bedford Park Boulevard approach would deteriorate to LOS E with 62.6 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 0.99. During the PM peak period, the eastbound Bedford Park Boulevard approach would deteriorate to LOS E with 76.2 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.03. The westbound Bedford Park Boulevard approach would deteriorate to LOS F with 105.1 average second of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.12. For the Saturday peak hour, the eastbound Bedford Park Boulevard approach would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.92. The westbound Bedford Park Boulevard de facto left turn lane would operate at LOS F with 116.3 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.08.

The No-Action Alternative conditions at the Webster Avenue/East Fordham Road intersection during the AM peak period show that the eastbound left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS E with 73.7 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 0.93. The eastbound through and right turn lane group would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.96. The northbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate in LOS F with 143.2 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.08. The northbound Webster Avenue through and right turn lane group would deteriorate to LOS E with 62.2 average seconds of delay. The southbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS F with 88.7 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 0.90. The southbound Webster Avenue through and right turn lane group would deteriorate in LOS F with 161.4 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.22. For the midday peak period, the eastbound through and right turn lane group would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.96. The westbound through lane group would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.90. The northbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS F with 108.5 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.04. The northbound Webster Avenue through and right turn lane group would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.90. The southbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS E with 67.6 average seconds of delay. The southbound Webster Avenue through and right turn lane group would deteriorate to LOS E with 70.0 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 0.98. For the PM peak period at this intersection, the eastbound through and right turn lane group would operate at a v/c ratio of 0.96. The northbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS F with 156.8 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.13. The northbound Webster Avenue through and right turn lane group would deteriorate to LOS E with 57.0 average seconds of delay. The southbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS E with 66.7 average seconds of delay. The southbound Webster Avenue through and right turn lane group would deteriorate in LOS F with 150.2 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.19. For the Saturday peak period, the northbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate to LOS F with 100.7 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 0.96. The northbound Webster Avenue

through and right turn lane group would deteriorate in LOS E with 67.5 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 0.91. The southbound Webster Avenue left turn lane would deteriorate in LOS F with 136.1 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 1.09. The southbound Webster Avenue through and right turn lane group would deteriorate in LOS E with 71.8 average seconds of delay and a v/c ratio of 0.94.

3.5.2 LOWER DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

A Lower Density Alternative to the proposed action was developed to determine whether the purpose and need established for the proposed action could be accomplished while avoiding or reducing the unmitigated significant adverse impacts to traffic that have been identified. The alternative was designed specifically to entail the type, density and locations of development on the identified projected development sites that together would be expected to meet the project purpose and need.

Under the Lower Density Alternative, there would be no commercial retail, restaurant or office uses permitted at projected development sites 1, 2, and 3, and residential development would be limited to a floor-area ratio (FAR) of 3.0. In addition, at projected development sites 4-21, the residential FAR would also be limited to 3.0, but no other changes would occur (e.g., other commercial, community facility, and office uses would be included as part of the alternative). As such, the mix of uses in the rezoning area would be similar to that mix of uses characterizing the proposed action, with projected development sites 1, 2, and 3 (at the southern end of the rezoning area nearest the location of predicted significant adverse traffic impacts) developed, but without commercial uses. Otherwise, this alternative would entail simply an overall lowering of the residential density on projected development sites 4-21.

With this lower density alternative, net incremental trips relative to the No-Action condition would be reduced (negative) for the AM, midday, and PM peak hours. No significant traffic impacts would occur at the intersection of Webster Avenue and Bedford Park Boulevard, unlike the proposed action. Two significant traffic impacts would occur at the intersection of Webster Avenue and East Fordham Road, which would be the southbound through and right turn lane group in the AM peak period, and the eastbound left turn lane in the PM peak period. As consideration of the No-Action Alternative reveals, traffic studies concluded that the unmitigatable traffic impacts at the intersection of East Fordham Road and Webster Avenue would not be avoided even absent the proposed action. Consequently, the Lower Density Alternative, while it could meet the project purpose and need, would not avoid the unmitigatable adverse traffic impacts.

Otherwise, as outlined below, the Lower Density Alternative would result in no impacts to other technical areas considered in the EIS, as would be the case with the proposed action.

Land Use, Zoning, Public Policy

The Lower Density Alternative, as described above, generally would entail the same overall mix of land uses as the proposed action and assume the development of the same projected development sites. As such, the differences between comparing either the proposed action or the Lower Density Alternative to the No-Action Alternative would be similar. As with the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would result in substantial changes to land use and zoning, compared to the No-Action Alternative, but these would not be adverse.

The Lower Density Alternative would apply to the same rezoning area as the proposed action, and differ only in text: specifically, the Lower Density Alternative, unlike the proposed action, would not allow commercial development to be part of the development on projected development sites 1, 2, and 3, and it would establish a lower residential FAR of 3.0 for these sites and projected development sites 4-21; the remaining projected development sites 22-24 would have the same development programs and densities as they do under the proposed action. Even at the lower density and absent the commercial development on the southernmost sites, however, the Lower Density Alternative would serve to direct development to the Webster Avenue corridor and preserve the existing development densities of the Norwood and Bedford Park neighborhoods to the west. Further, because the purpose and need would be the same for either the Lower Density Alternative or the proposed action, there would be no conflicts with public policy. Consistency with the Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) would be ensured with either the Lower Density Alternative or the proposed action, given that either would affect the same rezoning area, with the portion north of Mosholu Parkway and east of Webster Avenue lying within the coastal zone, and given the same projected development sites would be developed in similar ways. As the proposed action would be consistent with the WRP, so would the Lower Density Alternative.

Water and Sewer Infrastructure

The Lower Density Alternative would affect the same projected development sites as the proposed action and apply to the same rezoning area. Therefore, the drainage and catchment areas would also be the same. The Lower Density Alternative would result in modestly lower water and sewer demand than the Proposed Action, but neither the proposed action nor the Lower Density Alternative would result in significant adverse impacts. As the proposed action would not result in non-compliance with the WRP due to adverse impacts to water and sewer infrastructure, the Lower Density Alternative likewise would also be in conformity with the WRP in this regard.

Transportation

As noted above, the Lower Density Alternative was evaluated to determine whether it would eliminate the significant traffic impacts that were identified at the intersections of Webster Avenue at East Fordham Road and Webster Avenue at Bedford Park Boulevard. (See Chapter 3.3, "Transportation," for a detailed discussion of proposed action traffic impacts at these locations and Chapter 3.6, "Mitigation," for discussion of applicable mitigation.)

Compared to the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative was found to result in substantially fewer trips generated over the No-Action Alternative. Net incremental trips compared to the No-Action Alternative would be negative for the Lower Density Alternative in the AM, midday, and PM peak hours. No significant traffic impacts would occur at the intersection of Webster Avenue and Bedford Park Boulevard. However, two significant traffic impacts would occur at the intersection of Webster Avenue and East Fordham Road (rather than eleven significant impacts that were identified with the proposed action). These two impacts would occur at the southbound through and right turn lane group in the AM peak hour and the eastbound left turn lane in the PM peak hour.

Neighborhood Character

As with the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would also result in these unmitigated traffic impacts; however, as with the proposed action, these impacts would not result in conditions causing a significant adverse impact to defining features of the neighborhood. As with the proposed action, there would there be no combination of moderate effects associated with other areas that comprise neighborhood character (land use, urban design and visual resources, open space, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic and noise) that would result in a significant adverse impact. Both the proposed action and the Lower Density Alternative would introduce new commercial uses and residential uses to the Webster Avenue corridor, and at a density that would be appropriate to this wide avenue. The mix of uses, even without the commercial uses on projected development sites 1, 2, and 3 in the case of the Lower Density Alternative, would facilitate an enlivened streetscape suited to pedestrians throughout the rezoning area.

Like the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would also introduce affordable housing to the area, and despite its lower FAR for residential development, compared to the proposed action, the Lower Density Alternative would also improve the character of the Webster Avenue corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods and would not adversely affect neighborhood character.